In the Claims

1. (Canceled)

2. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit according to claim 25, wherein the pretensioner comprises:

at least one common contact surface on each segment.

3. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit according to claim 25 wherein the pretensioner is formed on a side wall of a segment.

4. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit according to claim 25 wherein the pretensioner is formed on overlapping regions of adjacent segments.

5. (Previously Presented) The line guidance unit of claim 25 wherein the common contact surface is a bearing surface between a protrusion formed on a segment and an adjacent segment when the line guidance unit is in the extended and unloaded condition.

6. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25, wherein the support strip comprises alternating support sections and link sections and the support sections and the link sections are made from materials with different properties using a multi-component forming method.

7. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 6, wherein the support sections and the link sections are manufactured by a multi-component injection molding method.

8. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 6, wherein the support sections and the link sections are manufactured by a multi-component extrusion method.

9. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 6, wherein the support sections define strength-enhancing profiles.

10. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 6, wherein the support strip comprises at least two sections joined together.

11. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 10, wherein the sections are joined together by positive locking mechanism.

12. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 10 wherein the sections are releasably joined to one another.

13. (Previously Presented) The line guidance unit of claim 5 wherein the support strip comprises a plurality of support sections that are trapezoidal in shape.

14. (Previously Presented) The line guidance unit of claim 5 wherein the support strip comprises a plurality of link sections that are rhomboidal in shape.

15. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25 wherein the segments are joined to the support strip by a positive locking mechanism.

16. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25 wherein the segments are releasably joined to the support strip.

17. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25, wherein the segments defining a connector for joining the segments to the support strip.

18. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 17, wherein the segments each comprise a side wall comprising a protrusion; and the support strip defines a recess for receiving the protrusion.

19. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 18, wherein the support section defines a traverse leadthrough through which at least one joining element extends for joining side walls of a segment to the support strip.

20. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25 wherein at least one segment comprises side walls which are joined by a first transverse bridge and each of the side walls comprises opposing protrusions and a transverse bridge between which the support strip is disposed.

21. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25 wherein at least one segment comprises side walls; a first transverse bridge; and a second transverse bridge.

22. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25, wherein at least one segment comprises side walls and a partial bridge spanning at least part of the channel.

23. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25, and further comprising a second support strip joined to the segments.

24. (Withdrawn) The line guidance unit of claim 25, wherein the line guidance unit is substantially straight between the first end and the second end when the line guidance unit is in the loaded extended condition.

25. (Currently Amended) A line guidance unit for guiding lines, the line guidance unit having a loaded condition when lines are present in the line guidance unit and is substantially extended and pre-tensioned in an unloaded condition when lines are not present in the line guidance unit, and comprising:

a first fixed end;

a second movable end;

a plurality of segments disposed between the first fixed end and the second movable end and each segment includes an overlap region and the segments define a line channel;

a longitudinal support strip joining at least three segments at a connection and extending between the first fixed end and the second movable end; and

a pretensioner including; a common contact surface on each segment overlap region, and ~~each~~ at least one common contact surface is disposed at a distance from the connection such that the contact surface engages the common contact surface on an adjacent segment to pretension and form the line guidance unit ~~and dispose the line guidance unit~~ into an arc-shape when the line guidance unit is in the substantially extended and unloaded condition when no lines are in the line channel, and ~~for resisting~~ such that the line guidance unit resists loads when the line guidance unit is in the loaded condition when lines are in the line channel.